
ALS and MS Patient Advocate Diane Winokur Appointed to Stem Cell Agency Board

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San Francisco, CA – Diane Winokur, a tireless advocate for people with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) and Multiple Sclerosis, has been appointed to the Independent Citizens Oversight Committee (ICOC), the governing board of the stem cell agency, the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine (CIRM).

California Lieutenant Governor Gavin Newsom made the appointment praising Diane, saying she "is known and respected by her colleagues for her dedication and commitment to the lives of the patients and families who suffer from neurodegenerative diseases. Her professional experience gives Diane the unmatched credential to help lead the ICOC in her role as my Patient Advocated appointment to the Committee."

"I am so complimented by the Lt. Governor's confidence in me," Diane said. "I have been working in the field of neurodegenerative research for almost twenty years and appreciate the toll that these illnesses have on patients and their loved ones. I am honored to be a part of finding treatments and a cure through stem cells for ALS, MS and other diseases."

As a key advocate for research into ALS (also known as Lou Gehrig's disease), Diane has been an active leader nationally and internationally in science and biotechnology. She served on the ALS Association's National Board of Trustees for five years and is presently an officer on the Golden West Chapter's Board of Directors. She also serves on the board of the Packard Center.

"We are delighted and honored to have Diane join the ICOC," says Jonathan Thomas, PhD, JD, Chairman of the California Institute for Regenerative Medicine's governing board. "Her knowledge, expertise and leadership will be a tremendous addition to the ICOC and help guide us in our work."

Diane's commitment springs from her own personal experiences with ALS. Her youngest son, Douglas, was diagnosed with ALS in 1995 and passed away in 1997. Her oldest son, Hugh, was diagnosed with ALS in 2005 and passed away in 2010.

"I have known Diane for many years and have always been impressed with her compassion and dedication," says former State Senator Art Torres, the Vice Chair for the ICOC and a patient advocate for cancer. "Having her as a member of the ICOC will help us keep our focus where it needs to be, on finding treatments and cures for patients."

About CIRM: CIRM was established in November 2004 with the passage of Proposition 71, the California Stem Cell Research and Cures Act. The statewide ballot measure, which provided \$3 billion in funding for stem cell research at California universities and research institutions, was overwhelmingly approved by voters, and called for the establishment of an entity to make grants and provide loans for stem cell research, research facilities, and other vital research opportunities. A list of grants and loans awarded to date may be seen here: <http://www.cirm.ca.gov/for-researchers/researchfunding>.

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